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REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL MEETING OF BROADCASTING EXPERTS ON THE REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY ASSISTANCE PROJECT (RAF/81/009) FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BROADCASTING IN AFRICA

Harare, Zimbabwe, 1 to 3 June 1984

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The Technical Meeting of Broadcasting Experts on the Report of the Preparatory Assistance Project (RAF/81/009) for the Development of Broadcasting in Africa, jointly organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was held in Harare, Zimbabwe from 1 to 3 June 1984.

B. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

2. Representatives of the following ECA member States participated in the meeting: Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, Upper Volta, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Representatives of the following bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations and African intergovernmental organizations also participated in the meeting: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa (URTNA).

C. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The meeting was opened by Mr. Chemist Siziba, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, who welcomed participants to Harare, Zimbabwe and pointed out the significance of the meeting. He wished participants a successful meeting on behalf of his Minister.

4. The representative of ITU, speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr. Richard Butler, thanked the Zimbabwean authorities for hosting the meeting and for the warm welcome accorded to the participants since their arrival in Harare.

5. The objective of the meeting was to provide a forum for African broadcasting administrations to reassess the needs for upgrading their services in line with the objectives of the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA). The scope of studies in the draft Preparatory Assistance Report on the Development of Broadcasting had been limited to 15 carefully selected countries that presented conditions representative of the situation in Africa as a whole. The PANAFTEL project being important in providing telecommunications infrastructures for broadcasting, he praised UNDP's efforts to develop telecommunications especially in the context of project RAF/81/009.

6. A representative of the ECA secretariat made a statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary of ECA. He said that broadcasting organizations represented long-range investments expected to yield returns in the form of an informed, motivated and educated public. The means of originating, delivering and receiving broadcast information were not only inadequate but also unevenly distributed in Africa South of the Sahara. He said that signal coverage was by and large still severely limited in rural areas and that receiving capability in rural areas was severely affected by the lack of electricity and batteries.

7. With reference to the UNTACDA programme data, the picture was still much the same for 1984 as it had been at the beginning of the Decade in 1978; the rate of programme implementation for broadcasting in particular was under 20 per cent and Africa with 10 per cent of world population had only 2 per cent of world radio receivers, 3 per cent of radio transmitters, 1 per cent of television sets and 2 per cent of television transmitters.

8. There was a particular need to redouble efforts in allocating resources and upgrading skills to run and extend services properly. The Preparatory Assistance Project had been designed to identify some of the critical areas of need.

9. The ECA representative referred to the eight projects which should be considered by experts as a package and entitled, "Development of Broadcasting in Africa". The experts were to approve and recommend it to eight donor organizations and financial institutions at the Technical Consultative Meeting on Broadcasting from 4 to 6 June at the same venue.

10. The representative of UNDP referred to the Development of Broadcasting in Africa as a good example of international co-operation. The projects had been conceived in recognition of the increasing importance of communications. There was a need to mobilize support from external donors; the role of UNDP in that effort was that of a catalyst. He thanked the Zimbabwean authorities for their hospitality.

11. In his opening statement, the representative of URTNA underlined the involvement of his organization in broadcasting development plans in Africa and listed some of the centres that his organization had established. The achievements of those centres had been beneficial to a number of African countries who participated in their activities. URTNA had been one of the first organizations to realize that much remained to be done to develop broadcasting in Africa. It was therefore gratifying that ITU, UNDP and ECA had brought into focus the numerous broadcasting problems in Africa and had proposed a set of concrete solutions to them.

Election of officers (agenda item 2)

12. The meeting elected the following countries to the bureau of the Technical Meeting on the Report of the Preparatory Assistance Project RAF/81/009:

Chairman:	Zimbabwe
Vice-Chairman:	The Congo
First rapporteur:	The Gambia
Second rapporteur:	Cameroon

Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 3)

13. The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda

4. Presentation of the draft Report on the Preparatory Assistance Project (RAF/81/009)

5. General discussion of the Draft Report

6. Recommendations

7. Adoption of the draft report of the meeting and the draft Report RAF/81/009 discussed with amendments

8. Any other business

9. Closure of the Meeting

Presentation of the draft report on the Preparatory Assistance Project RAF/81/009 (agenda item 4)

14. The representative of the ITU secretariat presented the report on the Preparatory Assistance Project for the Development of Broadcasting in Africa touching on origins of the project, the state of broadcasting, its potential as a tool for development and the needs and priorities identified in line with the UNPACDA Programme.

15. He mentioned the work of the project team, their terms of reference and their findings and recommendations for consideration of governments, national broadcasting organizations and donors. The team's submission included a list of eight projects formulated on the basis of identified needs in 15 African countries visited and with results extrapolated to cover all 45 countries South of the Sahara.

16. In conclusion, he stressed the need for concrete suggestions/recommendations from the meeting as to what should be done at national and regional levels to accelerate the development of broadcasting in Africa.

General discussion of the Draft Report (agenda item 5)

17. In the general debate that followed the presentation of the report, the following main points were raised by participants:

1. The need to upgrade the priority rating of broadcasting for purposes of national resources allocation;

2. The criteria for selection of the countries visited;

3. The need to lay emphasis not only on the maintenance of equipment and systems but also on the maintenance of radio receivers;

4. Availability of trained personnel in relation to the availability of equipment;

5. The need for standardization of equipment to facilitate training and maintenance of equipment;

6. Shortcomings of management with regard to their attitudes to development issues, defects in management structures and the need to find remedies;

7. The need to have industries for manufacturing of electronic components and equipment;

8. The slow growth of services in the medium wave being partially due to the unavailability of programme transmission circuits.

18. In response, the ECA/ITU secretariat team gave the following clarifications:

1. Criteria - selection of the 15 countries visited was done on the basis of regional and linguistic factors as well as the level of broadcasting development, in close consultation with URTNA;

2. Priority - As aid donors would generally finance projects in the national development plans, broadcasters should ensure that their projects were included in those plans;

3. Electronic components - There was a project under UNTACDA to be jointly undertaken by PATU, UNIDO, ITU and OAU.

19. The eight projects identified by the study were examined one by one and adopted with the following amendments:

(i) "Up-grading Training" - the word fellowships to be added to the "Nature of the Project";

(ii) "Training of Trainers for National Broadcasting Training Centres" - delete second paragraph under "Nature and constituent parts of the Project" and its relevant 'NOTE';

(iii) "Training Facilities for Radio Receiver Servicing Technicians" to be merged with "Development of Broadcasting in Africa Reception Facilities";

(iv) "Development of Broadcasting in Africa/Research and Documentation Centres" include standardization to title and amend project profile accordingly.

20. On the siting of training centres under the project, Development of Broadcasting in Africa, Assistance to Five Training Institutes, the meeting stressed the need to take into account such criteria as level of development, language, geographical distribution, etc.

21. It was agreed to have an additional project on management structures of broadcasting organisation, and Malawi was requested to assist in its formulation.

Recommendations (agenda item 6)

22. With regard to the recommendations, the following amendments and additions were made:

Chapter V

(i) Introduction

In paragraph 2 add "and other relevant African regional organizations" after "United Nations agencies"

(ii) 5.1 Recommendations for the attention of African Governments

Subtitle "Decentralization" to read "Decentralization/ruralization"

(iii) National Communication Policy Committees

Item 4 to be modified as follows after "policy making organs.": "Electricity board and other identifiable interest groups in society to formulate a co-ordinated communication development policy at the national level."

(iv) Training and Education

Item 7, add the following sentence as a last paragraph: "Training of technicians should be included in contracts with suppliers for purchase of their equipment."

(v) Radio Receiver Density

Item 10, paragraph 2, add after "radio receiver" the words "and spare parts"

(vi) Programming Policy

Item 12, add the following as the last paragraph: "The creation of a national mass media committee to co-ordinate programming activity is recommended."

(vii) Exchange of live programmes

Item 11, to replace last paragraph with the following: "It is recommended that African Governments harmonize tariff charges, taking into consideration technical and economic studies being undertaken by various regional and international organizations in order to encourage greater and optimum usage of the PANAFTEL network."

Add a new paragraph to read:

"It is recommended that African Governments take measures to strengthen URTNA for the development of intra-African exchange of broadcast programmes."

5.2 Recommendations for the attention of African broadcasting organizations

(viii) Development of Manpower

Item 17, to add "not" after the words "Nevertheless this should... "

(ix) Professional equipment

Item 24, to replace the last word in the second paragraph with "engineering personnel"

5.3 Recommendations for the attention of bilateral and multilateral sources of assistance

(x) Item 28, add a new paragraph after second paragraph to read: "It is recommended that aid donors assist URTNA with a view to strengthening its programmes through such activities as at the monitoring centre in Bamako.'

Adoption of draft report of the meeting and the draft report RAF/81/009 discussed with amendments (agenda item 7)

23. The draft report of the meeting and the draft report RAF/81/009 were adopted as amended.

24. In adopting the draft report RAF/81/009, the meeting called upon the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the International Telecommunication Union, African Governments and broadcasting organizations to implement the recommendations in collaboration with aid donors.

25. The ECA secretariat also informed the meeting that the projects, as outlined in the Preparatory Assistance Report RAF/81/009 for the Development of Broadcasting in Africa, would be presented as a package to the sixth Technical Consultative Meeting scheduled to be held in Harare from 4 to 6 June 1984 under the project BRP-60-001.

Any other business (agenda item 8)

26. A representative of ITU observed that many recommendations and resolutions had been adopted at the conferences, meetings and seminars of regional inter-governmental organizations, and at those of relevant United Nations and United

Nations agencies such as ECA, UNESCO and ITU. These recommendations and resolutions, crucial and important as they were to the development of broadcasting in Africa, would in themselves remain dead letters unless the African countries and broadcasting organizations themselves took the initiative to implement them and develop their broadcasting systems.

27. The conferences scheduled to be held during the latter part of 1984 and during 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988 had an important bearing on the development of telecommunications and broadcasting services in the world and African broadcasting organizations needed to prepare themselves to attend these conferences in order to participate in decision-making on the development of their broadcasting services.

28. Of immediate relevance to broadcasting in Africa were the following meetings:

1. June 25 to July 20 1984 for four weeks - Conference Preparatory Meeting to the CCIR for the World Administrative Radio Conference on the use of the Geostationary Satellite orbit and the planning of the space service utilizing it.

2. October 29 - December 7 1984 for six weeks, the Second session of the Regional Administrative Conference for FM Sound Broadcasting in the VHF Band (Region 1 and certain countries concerned in region 3).

3. Early 1985, ITU intended to hold Regional Seminars in preparation for the first session of the World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC) on the use of the Geostationary Satellite orbit and the planning of space services utilizing it. The actual dates for these seminars in Africa would be communicated to member States.

4. This would be followed up on 8 August to 13 September 1985 for five and a half weeks by the first session of the WARC on the use of the Geostationary Satellite orbit.

29. The schedule of relevant meetings for the years 1986-1988 would be communicated to member States later.

Closure of the meeting (agenda item 9)

30. Participants thanked the Chairman for his smooth conduct of business and thanked the international organizations for their assistance to participants to attend the meeting and expressed the hope that such assistance would be continued in future. The meeting also expressed its deep appreciation to the Government and people of Zimbabwe for the hospitality and warm welcome accorded to participants.

Recommendation No.1

Development of Broadcasting in Africa

The First Technical Meeting of Broadcasting of Experts held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 1 to 3 June 1984,

Considering

That the development of broadcasting in Africa has been slow compared to other telecommunications services,

Recalling

Recommendation No.14 of the Third African Telecommunications Conference on the development of broadcasting including television,

Aware

That the majority of people in the rural areas in most African countries do not have basic means of modern communications,

Realising

That without the active participation of the majority of the rural people in national development efforts, the socio-economic advancement of Africa will be hampered for a long time,

Notes with appreciation the role and activities of the Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union, in collaboration with the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Recommends

1. That the report on the Preparatory Assistance Project for the Development of Broadcasting in Africa RAF/81/009 be adopted;

2. That the International Telecommunication Union and Economic Commission for Africa be commended for the meeting, the first of its kind on broadcasting, and expresses the hope that the International Telecommunication Union and Economic Commission for Africa in the future would organize similar meetings on other development problems in broadcasting.